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Atari Online Magazine Issue #511
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MARCH 16, 1990 Volume 5 Number 11

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THIS WEEK - by Ron Kovacs
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SPECIAL FREE MAGAZINE OFFER TO Z\*NET READERS

You and your user group or friends can have a FREE box full of brand new back issues of ST-XPRESS for just the cost of shipping!

SPROCKETS is a new ST hardware and software development company in Los Angeles, and it has taken over the old storage area belonging to ST-XPRESS MAGAZINE... and there are LOTS of full boxes of back issues that MUST GO. Z\*NET has talked SPROCKETS into offering the magazines to user groups and readers of Z\*NET Online rather than allow them to be destroyed. ST-XPRESS was a respected, quality slick newsstand magazine supporting the Atari ST from 1986 through November 1989, when they

released their final issue.

SPROCKETS will be happy to send you or your group a full box of issues if you send an address plus a short written statement saying that you will accept the C.O.D. Ground Shipping charges through United Parcel Service. You should expect this charge to be \$8 to \$15 at most for typical locations. REMEMBER, UPS will NOT ship to POST OFFICE BOXES.

Each box typically contains 50 copies of a single issue, and many different issues are available... but PLEASE don't ask for specific months or mixed issue boxes! If you want more than one box, we CAN be sure to ship you a different month in each box. MOST boxes are of the later issues... and a few might even come with the subscription disks in them!

Remember, this offer is basically to see to it that these old issues of ST-XPRESS can go to some good use. SPROCKETS has volunteered to ship them without labor charges if your group will cover the shipping C.O.D. charges.

If you want a box (or several!) for your club or friends, send a card or letter RIGHT AWAY to:

SPROCKETS' MAGAZINE GIVEAWAY  
417B Foothill Blvd  
Suite 381  
Glendora, California  
91740

This offer is open to any Z\*NET readers and expires when the supply of magazines is exhausted or on April 15, whichever comes first.

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Z\*NET NEWSWIRE  
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#### ATARIFESTS TO BE MORE CAREFULLY SCHEDULED:

Atari has discussed and announced the intention to exert more control over scheduling of Atari shows that request Atari's involvement. After some hard lessons last year that resulted in the cancellation of both user and commercial shows due to time conflicts, Atari now intends to firmly stand behind a policy of NO SHOWS WITHIN 30 DAYS OF OTHER SHOWS. On the agenda at this time are the upcoming World of Atari show in Disneyland April 7-8, the Glendale (Los Angeles) Atarifest in early September, and the WAACE (Virginia/DC) Atarifest in late September. These last two shows are to be the last that will be allowed to violate the 30 day rule, as they were both scheduled before User Group Coordinator Bob Brodie was available for involvement. The 30 day spacing will allow vendors and developers more time to prepare for shows and will likely make ALL shows stronger. Atari might soon want to "write in" the two CES and COMDEX shows, the annual HANNOVER show, and at least the January NAMM shows. These events certainly are as draining as Atarifests on both Atari and third-party developers. User Groups interesting in setting up show dates are encouraged to call Bob Brodie at Atari (408) 745-2052, to insure no scheduling conflicts.

#### ATARI SOFTSOURCE READY TO GO:

Charles Cherry, Atari Corp Developer Support mogul, says that the SOFTSOURCE Program is ready to premier on a major telecommunications network. The system is 100% completed and is in private testing to be sure that it is fully operational when it is formally introduced in April. Softsource will be an online database and library of commercial software in demo form, available for download and inspection by any user. The concept is to have EVERY COMMERCIAL PROGRAM AVAILABLE ANYWHERE included in the collection, along with online interactive support and indexing. A user will eventually be able to key in a few parameters and be offered a list of candidates for program selection. Choose French Revolution wargame simulations, or scientific graphing applications, or whatever... and be able to actually try the choices before you buy. Shortly after Softsource premiers online, it will be pressed onto CD-ROM disks and be available at Atari Dealers for fast free examination of the entire collection. The disks themselves will likely be made available for next to nothing for home perusal... once the Atari CD ROM is commercially released. That blessed event is likely to follow the dealer program by a few months... with luck!

#### MIGRAPH BEGINS SHIPPING TOUCH-UP FOR THE IBM:

TOUCH-UP is a terrific image editor, plus a scanner interface, originally designed for the Atari ST by MIGRAPH. Now, Migraph has completed the port of the popular graphic editor to the IBM platform, and shipping began last week. A special is in effect for a limited time, giving you the IBM TOUCH-UP for only \$174 plus \$5 shipping... discounted from the regular \$199. If you have experienced TOUCH-UP on the ST at home, suggest it for the IBM at work! MIGRAPH, (206)838-4677.

#### DAVE SMALL/HAPPY COMPUTER LAWSUIT SETTLED:

A groundbreaking lawsuit involving charges of defamation via international telecommunications message systems was settled by a Court Order that also forbids the parties to discuss the details. Dave Small of Gadgets By Small was sued by Richard Adams of Happy Computer over statements posted as messages on GENie last year. Adams contended that the statements were false and defamatory to him and his products, notably to the DISCOVERY CARTRIDGE copy device. Small was equally upset over Adams' inclusion and subsequent republication in an online magazine of plans on how to use the Discovery Cart to eliminate the need of the Spectre Cart, the Macintosh emulator from Gadgets. This week, Small said that the suit had been settled "amicably" (stressing that it was "really, really amicable") but that he was forbidden by agreement from discussing the terms of the settlement. It is known that HAPPY is moving quickly towards the IBM market for their future product line, and it may be that Adams no longer is as ready to fight over an Atari-specific disagreement.

#### 68030 ATARI LIKELY TO BE SHOWN AT WOA DISNEYLAND:

Late word from TWO locations both point to the 68030 computer(s) to be shown at the Anaheim World of Atari... one from Atari (the TT) and one from Dave Small. According to Sam Tramiel, every effort should be made to show the Atari TT at the show despite the fact that it is not yet ready for production. And Gadgets by Small will be showing their prototype 68030 CPU replacement board at the same show. Dave Small's project is a GADGETS production with consulting by Jim Allen Jr. of FAST TECHNOLOGIES, and may or may not ever actually make it to commercial

production. However, Dave says it is REAL NOW, it WORKS, and the next step is to make the first printed circuit boards for more testing. Able to accommodate CPU speeds as high as 32MHZ (with EXPENSIVE support high speed RAM), or more economical but still pricey 16MHZ chips, the Small 68030 will make ANY ST or MEGA into a speed demon, almost an order of magnitude faster than the current machine. It WON'T make it into a TT, tho... for that, you need Atari itself.

#### ATARI REPORTS NET INCOME OF \$5.7 MILLION:

Atari announced last week that income from continuing operations of \$5.8 million or 10 cents per share on sales of \$170.6 million for the quarter ended Dec. 31, 1989. This compares with income of \$9.3 million on sales of \$152.6 million for the fourth quarter ended Dec. 31, 1988. Net income was \$5.7 million in the fourth quarter of 1989 as compared to a loss of \$97 million last year. The results for the quarter reflect continued revenue growth from the Atari ST and Atari PC4 MS-DOS compatible product lines, and from initial shipments of the new handheld Portfolio computer and Lynx handheld color video game machine. During the quarter, sales of certain products were facilitated by lowering prices in order to make room for new product lines. Subsequent to year end, Atari consummated the sale of certain Southern California leasehold interests held by its discontinued Federated Group unit. No additional losses are anticipated on final disposition of Federated. Sam Tramiel, president and chief executive officer, stated: "For Atari, 1989 was a transition year. It witnessed the introduction of a new generation of handheld machines -- the Lynx and Portfolio; and, the disposition of an extraneous business segment. For 1990, Atari is fully committed to regaining market share in the video game sector with products like the Lynx, increasing our market share in the personal computer sector with products like the Atari STE, and maximizing our opportunity in the handheld or palmtop computer business with Portfolio."

#### NINTENDO WINS SUIT:

The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington D.C. has ruled that Nintendo may sue retailers who sell unauthorized cartridges manufactured by Atari Games/Tengen Inc. for use with the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) and which Nintendo asserts infringe its patents. This decision vacates a preliminary injunction previously granted to Atari Games by the U.S. District Court in Northern California, which enjoined suits against retailers who deal in infringing cartridges pending the outcome of litigation between Nintendo and Atari Games/Tengen Inc. Nintendo has consistently asserted that the manufacture and sale of unlicensed video game cartridges by Atari Games violated a number of Nintendo's rights, including certain patents Nintendo has obtained on its Nintendo Entertainment System and associated game cartridges. Last February, Atari Games obtained a preliminary injunction preventing Nintendo from suing Atari Games' dealers for patent infringement, by arguing that Nintendo had improperly monopolized the video game marketplace by asserting its patent rights and by supervising the production of game cartridges for its Nintendo Entertainment System. The Court of Appeals found "nowhere does the district court make a finding that Atari could probably prove its allegations. The district court has not referred to a factual basis for its granting of the preliminary injunction against Nintendo and this court cannot find one." The appeals court stated that "... the record fails to reflect that Atari came forth with any evidence... to prove that Nintendo was enforcing its patent in bad faith, or expanding its patent rights beyond their proper scope." Furthermore, the court said, "This court cannot

find, either in the district court's opinion, or anywhere in the record, specific factual findings, or the basis for any findings, concerning Nintendo's licensing agreement running afoul of the antitrust laws..." In fact, the court said, "Many of the restrictions Nintendo places on its licensees are not, as a matter of law, antitrust violations."

#### GENIE ADDS IBM PRODUCT ROUNDTABLE:

GENie has added an IBM Product Support RoundTable for online access to various vendors of IBM PC and compatible software and services. The following are currently providing online support and information in the RoundTable:

- The Software Link  
provides multiuser operating systems (PC-MOS), and LAN products.
- Volkswriter, Inc.  
markets a line of word processing software including Volkswriter.
- Computer Technologies Online  
offers support for Mitsubishi, Osicom, and The Complete PC.
- Spectra Software  
the publisher of PowerBASIC, a full-featured programming environment.
- ISD  
provides DynaCADD, a new CADD program for the IBM PC and compatibles. In the coming months, ISD will be porting its best-selling software for the Atari ST to the IBM platform.

Each of the five current participating vendors will have a dedicated Bulletin Board area in the IBM Product Support RoundTable where messages will be posted covering news and rumors as well as technical questions and answers by all members. A software library is also available where they will post product announcements, technical and application notes, and bug fixes which will be available for downloading by GENie subscribers. For more information on GENie call, (800) 638-9636.

#### SPA DONATES TO ANTI-PIRACY:

The Software Publishers Association has donated \$25,000 to Britain's Federation Against Software Theft to establish a piracy hotline and corporate audit program similar to those set up by the SPA in North America. Last September, the SPA implemented a toll-free hotline (800) 388-PIR8 to receive reports about piracy. It now averages about 20 calls each day, some of which have resulted in lawsuits backed by the group's copyright production fund.

#### SOFTWARE TOOLWORKS ACQUIRES MINDSCAPE:

The Software Toolworks has completed the acquisition of Mindscape Inc. Mindscape develops and distributes in North America certain game cartridges for the Nintendo Entertainment System and develops, publishes and distributes a broad line of microcomputer software products for the consumer markets, and owns software distributing and publishing subsidiaries serving European and Pacific Rim markets. For the nine months ended Sept. 30, 1989, Mindscape had revenues of \$27.9 million.

#### SPA SOFTWARE AUDIT PROGRAM:

The Software Publishers Association announced this week the completion of several successful corporate audits. SPA corporate software audits, which often occur in lieu of litigation, involve an analysis of a company's hard-disk directories and a review of their software purchase records. When unauthorized copying has occurred, the audited company

must destroy any pirated software, purchase legitimate copies and make a contribution to the SPA Copyright Protection Fund.

#### COLOR DREAMS:

Color Dreams Inc. was formed after the suit between Nintendo and Tengen (Atari Games Corp.) was filed and is an independent developer and publisher of non-infringing Nintendo compatible software games. Its specific goal was to establish a source of non-infringing games for the Nintendo Entertainment System. Information from the suit enabled Color Dreams Inc. to successfully create software games and game cartridges that do not infringe Nintendo's patents, trademarks and copyrights. After close scrutiny by its own corporate counsel and more than one independent patent counsel, Color Dreams Inc. produced games that are free of infringement. Color Dreams appears to be the only company producing and licensing technology which permits the creation and sales of non-infringing Nintendo compatible software.

#### MAGNAVOX AGAINST MEDIAGENIC:

It was announced this week that the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California has rendered a decision on damages in the patent infringement suit brought by Magnavox against Mediagenic (then Activision) in 1982. In 1986, the court issued a judgment stating that the patent in question was valid and that 11 Activision video game cartridges had infringed it. This judgment was affirmed on appeal in 1988 and a trial on the issue of damages was held in November 1989. The court awarded damages of approximately \$3.5 million to Magnavox, based on the determination that Mediagenic should pay a 5 percent royalty on \$70 million of infringing video cartridge sales. As a result of the decision, Mediagenic anticipates a loss for its fourth quarter and for the 1990 fiscal year, ending March 31, 1990.

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FIRST SYDNEY AUSTRALIA ATARI SHOW - EXCLUSIVE REPORT  
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by Jon Clarke, Auckland, New Zealand

How do you describe the first ever Atari specific show in the South Pacific in a few words? Well things like "amazing stuff", "fantastic presentation", and "wow" come to mind. After years of not having an Atari presence in both Australia and New Zealand computer shows, it is good to see them back at the fore-front of technology Down-Under.

I found out about the Sydney Atari show last Thursday night, two days before it opened to the public, and two and a half thousand miles and one country away from here. So it was off to the travel agent to book a few Air tickets and at 7:30 Saturday morning our plane touched down in Sydney. The venue for the show was the Queen Victoria Centre. A lovely old building they have renovated, with 4 levels of shopping for mum and the kids, while you slip away to level 3 for the Atari show. You couldn't help but notice the Atari show as 70% of all the shoppers in the Queen Victoria Centre had little plastic bags with the Atari Fuji symbol on them.

From the time you stepped out of the lift, (or climbed the stairs) the

Atari people were always on hand to help. The reception area was filled with videos playing exerts on Midi, desktop, and the STE. Once you registered and walked into the show, you were breath taken by all the activity going on. It would have taken very little time to do a circuit of the show, but it took me and most people over an hour the FIRST time. There was so much to see and participate in, from hands on demo's to listening pleasure from live bands using midi.

From the entrance to the pavilion you could see people all huddled over some ST's, so off I went to see what the attraction was. Well it was the new STE's doing their stuff in stereo sound and full living colour. Atari-OZ have done some amazing demo's for the STE. Five in total. The one I loved was the stereo sound and graphic demo, which was linked to a 'Roland' sound system on which the STE controlled the sound output. Have you ever heard a Kookaburra (a native Australian Bird) at 100db of sound and in stereo. Real mind blowing stuff. In fact all the STE demo's were of a very high standard indeed. This is the first time most of the Atari users had seen the STE and the Atari reps were being inundated with questions. The STE will be in general release down-under by the time you read this.

This then lead me to another group of people all looking at a large colour monitor, and all in laughter as the guys from ACRE Industries demoed the first Australian made 'Genlock' for the Atari ST. They had the video camera focused on a chap sitting on a chair and they were doing all sorts of things to the guys image on the video screen with 'Cyber Paint'. The effects were humourous to say the least and a real crowd pleaser. The 'Genlock', Acre has designed will work with both American (NTSC) and Australian (PAL) T.V systems, and at a retail price of under \$AUS900 it will be a winner for them. I loved the 'Cyber' animation with realtime video , the world of desktop video is truely here.

Moniterms! They were everywhere doing their stuff, from Calamus to scanning to word processing. In the third party suppliers area there was a group of hard core DTP people being blown away by 'Outline', and a strange voice coming from within. <Kiwi's notice these things.> This was Nathan from 'Ditek', 'ISD' demonstrating CALAMUS and CALAMUS OUTLINE. Needless to say the crowd was amazed at the quality of Outline and a little birdy told me at the show, that the first order of 'Outline' was sold out by Saturday. Having read the reviews and seen the conferences on 'Outline' I was very impressed to see what it did. But alas I have an US ST, and they only had the UK software at the show. These shows really bring home how small the Atari world is becoming as across from the 'Outline' booth was the A.C.E NSW User Group booth, with members, and other clubs from all over Australia, including John Hutchinson who is currently working in Australia. A.C.E NSW (New South Wales, a state of OZ) were doing demo's of the ST, along with Norm who runs the largest PD library in OZ, based in the state of South Australia. Now opposite this were some of the star attractions of this show. An Atari TT 030/2 and a Transputer. The ozzies had a demo they wrote running on the Transputer, with outstanding quality. No wounder these are called graphic work horses! Release date of the TT is to be in May/June and the same for the New Transputer.

You can't go to a show with out getting involved right? Well come hell or high water there was no way Mum, Dad and the kids could get past the Lynx booth. There was this humungous sign introducing the 'Lynx' and a chance to win a free 'Lynx' if you got the high score on Blue Lightning.

Well here I was with all the others doing a few practice flights, when the call to arms came and we were off. "Well this little hand held game machine is sure a winner", I thought as I zoomed around the screen. Then all of a sudden our 5 minutes were up and with a score of 14,410, I was happy enough. The winner of the Lynx in the end had a score of over 48,000 in just 5 minutes playing time.

Next to all of this came the IBM world of Atari, from the Portfolio to the big grunTERS, all demonstrating their stuff. I loved the Portfolio area and was surprised to learn that the Australian users have been developing a lot of software. Available now is a program called 'Timelog', and is a must for professional users of the 'Portfolio'. This is a complete time management/recording system, and will eliminate the need to fill in manual time sheets. Along with this there has been some programs written to do Meter reading, bar-code reading, and with several other programs under development for a "Fast wire" type program called 'Mac-slave' and 'ST-slave'. Available later this year will be GWbasic, Laplink, Crosstalk, Word Perfect, Lotus Express, a Financial Calculator, a scientific calculator, DOS utilities, and a few games like Chess, Backgammon, Tetris, and Golfing with Greg Norman.

Down this part of the hall were all the other demos of STE's, ST's, Clones and the likes doing everything you can think of. In the middle of all of this were Lucas and Joe from Austec, a large Atari Dealership from Melbourne in the State of Victoria. They had the Spectre GCR doing its thing on the large screen. Needless to say the MAC owners were in awe at the sight of this. Austec were one of the 3 booths with the CDAR504 CD\_ROM players, and had some ST public domain CD\_ROM's on display. They also had their own hard disks running, one they manufacture themselves, a very nice neat little package.

From here we headed into the Midi area of the show. This was by far the loudest section of the whole show with 'Roland' demonstrating their little boxes of tricks that gave the impression the Sydney Philharmonic Orchestra, to machine guns, to 10,000 people clapping hands enjoying their favourite Pop group. Well not to be out done by the USA show's, Atari-Oz arranged for Simon Lloyd of 'Ice House' fame to be on stage most of Saturday for live midi demos, playing their hit music. Wow it was like being at the concert. Then on Sunday they had 'Sirocio' playing live using midi. I was speaking to Allen from the 'Roland' booth about optic drives and the likes, and it seems the in thing in OZ at the moment are the 'W.O.R.M' drives, and it is not unusual to have over 1 gigabyte of storage for their sound samples. 1 gig! Jeeze, we are in the wrong computer field, guys. The music from the Atari Machines including STacy, and the live stage were out of this world, and could have been the whole show in itself.

Yes, that's right STacy was there in several booths with the midi guys and all of us drooling at it. I thought it might have been a little smaller than the T1200 I am writing this on, but no it was not to be. But never the less STacy will be on my Christmas shopping list, along with 70% of those that attended the show. The guys from Electric Factory had Stacy hooked into their midi equipment. While Phill from Grass Valley (from Western Australia) had one on his stand running that popular program Neo-Desk in demo mode.

Not be out done by the Midi booths there was a little booth next to the stage that nearly floored me. After going to this show I have come to the conclusion Australian programs and programmers are the WORLDS BEST



KEPT SECRET. Here was a ST with a colour monitor and a CD\_ROM. Not to much to see equipment wise, but by the time you fought your way through the crowd you were presented with Australia's first CD\_ROM program. Called 'Sound Scope' you can listen and what is more important learn about an orchestra, or individual instruments, or even play your favorite compact disks. The graphics interface has to be seen to be believed. When your are in the orchestra section you see the Conductor leading the sections of the orchestra. When say the horns section are playing, they are highlighted. It is like being in the balconies in Albert Hall, in fact if you close your eyes you may even feel like you are there. This also supports full Stereo and will even run on Stacy, this is really amazing stuff.

#### Items on display

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- o Atari 520/1040STE Shipping Now for Australia/New Zealand
- o Atari STacy Shipping 1990
- o Atari TT030/2 Shipping May June 1990 for Australia/New Zealand
- o Atari Transputer Shipping Later 1990, although in limited release
- o Atari CDAR504,CDROM Shipping Now for Australia/New Zealand
- o Atari Megafiles Shipping Now
- o TOS 1.4 Rainbow Shipping Now for \$AUS199 and \$NZ199 fitted
- o Atari Lynx Shipping Now
- o Atari Portfolio Shipping Now
- o Atari PC range Shipping Now
- o Moniterms Shipping Now
- o Hawk Flat Scanner Shipping Now
- o ISD's Outline Shipping Now
- o SoundScope Shipping now
- o Timelog Shipping Now
- o AGS-20 genlock Shipping Now
- o STe Demo's Available soon from ATARI-OZ look on GENie.
- o Transputer Demo See Atari Australia
- o Roland-midi Shipping Now <great gear>
- o Music Publishing Shipping Now
- o Plus much much more...

In conclusion I feel the show was by far the best show I have seen in our part of the world, and Atari-Oz should be congratulated for their effort that went into the show. The next show will be the Bits'n'Bits show here in Auckland on April 26th of this year at the Auckland Expo Centre. This time Atari-NZ will have a booth and be strutting their stuff.

#### Footnote:

As I said before, I learned about this show on Thursday night with the show about to start on Saturday morning 10am Oz time. Well on the GENie conference with ISD and Atari-Oz, Allistair Campion told me it was on, and invited us to attend. Well the bets were on to whether or not I would arrive. Needless to say a few dollars were flowing at 11am on Saturday.

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THE CLUBROOM  
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(Editors Note: The Clubroom is a continuing series of articles written by User Group members subscribing to the Z\*Net International Atari Newsletter Supplement. We ask individuals to write about specific topics their groups perform and seek out original ideas so that we may share them with other Atari User Groups. The following article appeared in the March 1990 edition of the Z\*Net IANS.)

#### CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

by Leo Sell

(Reprinted from Z\*Net March 1990 International Atari Newsletter)

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I've been asked to share a little about how my club, the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society has collected, organized, and profited from our disk libraries. In thinking it over, and discussing the subject, other means of producing revenue, used by other clubs also came to mind. Perhaps these ideas will trigger other ideas for all of you.

I'll start with a brief history of the CHAOS Library. CHAOS, from its inception, has been blessed with leaders and volunteers who insisted on structure and organization in each aspect of the club. Our first librarian applied the principles with relish (to the disks, not the hot dogs). Instead of a mishmash of programs, stuffed willy-nilly onto disks, he insisted (thankfully) on carefully structuring the library - Utilities, Games, Demos, and so on. That structure has been continued even as the club grew and began supporting the ST computers.

Each librarian since, having the structure already established has been able to concentrate on collecting new, quality programs, and preserving the organization of the library. With the volume of new programs that is sometimes available, we do on occasion offer disks with a mixture of programs - a Disk of the Month - in order to get programs right into members' hands. But all of the programs are eventually absorbed into the proper library category.

Not that things stay static. The ST is so much more capable that our librarians have had to expand the categories to reflect it. And we continue to update and collect new public domain and shareware programs.

By the way, once you've established a structure (or adopt ours), I think the most valuable asset you can have is a member who enthusiastically collects and checks out new programs. A member like that is worth their weight in disks!

The long and the short of it is that because of the structure and organization established early on, and preserved as time has gone by, CHAOS has one of the best organized public domain libraries around. And because we aggressively update and add programs, it's also one of the most complete.

And it has come to make us money in an unexpected way.

#### INNOVATIVE THINKING

About three years ago, one of our members came up with an idea on how to use the library to better advantage. His suggestion: rent it out! Since CHAOS had a very complete, highly organized disk library, and

other clubs and individuals might not have the means to put it together, or to buy the disks outright, we thought it would be a great way to distribute the library in an affordable manner. Let clubs or individuals substitute their own effort in copying on their own media. We'd provide a master from which to copy.

It worked very well from a revenue standpoint and was well received by those who rented it. That was a couple of years ago. A lot of programs have been upgraded or developed since then. So....we've updated both the 8-bit and the ST libraries, and we're once again offering a rental deal.

If you or your club would like to rent one of the most complete and best organized p.d. libraries around, here are the details. Renting the 8-bit is \$75 with a \$125 deposit; the ST library is \$99 with a \$200 deposit. Rent both for \$150 with a \$300 deposit. And we're not forgetting those who rented before - we do offer a special deal for you. If you want more information, write: CHAOS Rental, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901. (End of commercial).

## INNOVATIVE THINKING II

So why did I title this section, "Innovative Thinking" and what does that have to do with other clubs? My point is this: pay attention to the innovative thinkers in the club. A number of clubs have used ideas like the CHAOS Rental Program to make money and support their operations. Here are a few examples off the top of my head.

JACS (Jersey Atari Computer Society?), when PrintShop was at the height of popularity, worked very hard to collect icons. As my memory serves they ended up with about six disks full. They marketed them to other individuals and user groups for a reasonable fee. Their hard work saved the customers a great deal of trouble and made the club a nice chunk of change.

GAG (Genesee Atari Group, Flint Michigan) has capitalized in several similar ways. At various computer shows, I've seen them sell a new (at the time) and creative disk labeling program written by a member and displayed for maximum impact. They've also done well simply by labelling their disks well at a show and displaying them on sale boards where they could be easily seen and inspected. Lately, some of their members have cooperated to make up numerous Blitz cables to sell to ST users who would just as soon let someone else do the work.

CHAOS once made a special deal on a 256k upgrade board for 800XL's. By careful purchase of ram chips, we were able to offer a fantastic deal on upgrades.

## GETTING THE POINT

I hope the point is obvious at this point. Clubs and their members are only limited by their imaginations. Let 'em loose. I know sometimes we all get a bit burned out. But, keep your eyes open for opportunity. When it arises, latch onto it. Your club won't make millions, but it might make enough to keep operating for another year or two. It all boils down to good ideas and good marketing (strange concept for Atari folks, huh!). GOOD LUCK Atarians.

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MAXIFILE REVIEW - by Keith MacNutt, TRACE  
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(Reprinted from the Puget Sound Atari News, March 1990)

## The Need

Like the heading says, this program is a complete replacement for the Atari desktop. If any of you have used the desktop that came with the ST, you will have found that it does the job, but is lacking in some areas. You can format, copy disks and do file sorts. However, past that, the desktop loses steam.

Most power users have long found that they could supplement the desktop with accessories or programs that reside in the auto folder. This gets the job done - but at a high cost in lost memory. Each program or accessory may only be able to do a small part of the job the user wanted done. But collectively, they take up much more memory than most users would like. The solution would seem to be to take all the bits and pieces of all your favorite accessories and auto programs, and put them into one efficient little program that did everything while using very little memory.

## The Solution

Well, someone at CodeHead software must have been listening to all the users out there because the MAXIFILE program that they've put together does just about everything you could want, and more! And, they only need 64K to do it in!

What's truly remarkable is the fact that the same MAXIFILE program can be used as an accessory or as a program. For those of you who are new to the ST this means that if it is loaded as an accessory (.ACC), you will find it under the fuji symbol (or DESK option) on the menu bar. Thus, MAXIFILE can be used at any time you are able to access the accessory feature from within a program. However, if you are short of memory, then you can run the program (.PRG) version. And, after completing your task, the program will exit and all memory is returned to the user.

MAXIFILE comes on a single side disk with: MAXIFILE.PRG, MAXIFILE.ACC, a readme file explaining recent changes, and a folder that contains the shareware programs PINHEAD (which speeds up the loading of programs) and LGSELECT (which is a replacement file selector). If you use LGSELECTOR and you have MAXIFILE loaded as an accessory then you can access MAXIFILE directly by clicking on the selector box provided by LGSELECT.

## Options/Features

### PATH'S =====

This is the area that the user sets the source and destination pathways. To change either source or destination pathway you would click on either word and pick the drive letter from the highlighted selector box. This same operation can be preformed by hitting "s" for source or "d" for destination. If you have favorite pathways that you use frequently then you may want to save those in the CHOOSE PATH menu. This menu will allow you to store up to 20 of your favorite paths for future use. If

at anytime you were to swap a disk in either drive A or B, then by using the ESC key, you can update the path window.

#### SEARCH FILTERS

=====

Using this option allows the user to specify from one to sixteen different extensions to be display in the window. So you could show all files that have an extension of PC1, PC2, PC3, PI1, PI2, PI3, SPC, and so on all in one window at one time. To my knowlege this is the only program that allows the user this much flexibility in one package. If you do not find the extension you are looking for among the ones provided you can enter it on a small command line at the top of the screen. To look for programs with the first four letters of TEXT you would enter TEXT\*.\* and only these files would be display in the window. One other nice feature is the ability to include or exclude all files with certain extensions, so that you only see the file extensions that you are looking for. With the release of TOS 1.4 a bug was fixed that toggled an archive bit that indicated if a file had been modified since it was last backed-up. In MAXIFILE you now have the ability to see all files that have the archive bit set. You also have the ability to see all files that were created or moved before or after a certain date.

#### CONTROLS

=====

Across the bottom of the window there is a row of buttons. The first control is actually a PAGE-FLIP control. If there are more files in the selected drive or directory than can fit in the window, click on the right arrow in the small window and you will flip into the next window of files. To get back to the first window just click on the left arrow.

#### SORT AND WARN

=====

This control allows the user to pick the type of sort you would like. You can sort by name, extension, size or date. The warning button allows the user to pick from a list of 11 different warnings. These show as windows that warn the user that they can either proceed or cancel the present function.

#### COUNTER

=====

This is used to show how much room the highlighted files occupy.

#### MOVE

=====

Moves the selected files from the source to the destination. This button will not be highlighted unless you have selected at least one file from the window.

#### COPY

=====

Copies selected files from source to destination.

#### NAME

=====

Rename files with the top line of the pop-up window having the old name and the lower line the new name.

#### OTHER

=====

This button allows the user to select:

- TOUCH: gives the selected file or files the present time and date.
- LOCK AND UNLOCK: lock file so that it can not be modified.
- HIDE AND SHOW: hide files so that they will not show in the directory. When using MAXIFILE these files are in light lettering.
- ARCHIVE BIT: set or clear the archive bit so that on a backup set files will be backed up.
- CLEAR SELECTIONS: clears all the selected options in this window.

MORE

====

This is probably the most used feature in the program. From this window you can:

- CREATE FOLDER: creates a folder on either the source or destination and gives the option to open the folder so that files can be copied directly into it.
- FORMAT DISK: allows the user to format A, B or both, pick 9 or 10 sector by 80 or 82 tracks, single or double sided, and if you are using a version of tos that supports the sector skew format, format to that type. If you pick format both A and B the window will change to allow you to name both disks before formatting begins. After A finishes formatting B will begin.
- COPY DISK: this feature allows you to copy any unprotected disk from A to B. It will first check that the destination is formatted and has enough room to do the operation. If the disk is not formatted you will be warned that you can format the destination or cancel the operation all together.
- DISK INFO: get all the information on any drive that is available. You will get the amount of free space, number of sectors and size of sector and much more.
- PRINT DIRECTORY: you can print the source directory with full info on each file or you can just print the names.
- COMMENT PATH: clicking on this button will bring up a selector button so that the user can pick the default path where the comment file will be saved. The comments are attached to the files and the user can give a brief description of the file with three lines of 58 character each.
- OPTION SWITCHES: From this window, located to the right, you can set to keep or change the time stamp when you move files, keep attributes on copy, show hidden files, turn write verify on or off and save the current paths for the source and destination. In the file display option window you can show only the file and folder names (so that you can display 80 files instead of 48), display with sizes (the 48 file option), with dates or with times. The last button allows the user to turn off or on the showing of dividing lines between rows of files.
- SAVE: Allows the user to save all the option set in the previous windows.

The above options and features are most, but not all, of the surprises you will find in the MAXIFILE package. And, as complete as this program is, I suspect that there will be even more surprises in future upgrades.

## Conclusion

After getting this program just before Christmas (in a upgrade to HOTWIRE (HOTWIRE PLUS)), I find that I seldom use or want to use the other file selectors presently on the market. So, if you find that the other selectors just don't cut it, then this is one program that you owe it to yourself to check out!

Codehead Software  
P.O. Box 74090  
Los Angeles, CA 90004

P.S.: MAXIFILE by itself is \$29.95 and as a package with HOTWIRE it is \$59.95.

```
*****  
ST STack - by Alice Amore  
*****
```

PBMCHES.S.ARC                      Programmer:   Odiseas Kosmatos

=====

PLAY-BY-MODEM-CHESS allows two people to carry on a chess match via modem. All the amenities are included. Simply send the command to your modem to dial a friend's number (or put your modem in answer mode, whatever the case may be).

The screen is divided into two portions, one for the chess board and command menu, the other a typing area so that players can type messages to each other. Move a chess piece, and the move is automatically transmitted to your opponent. If your screen gets corrupted by line noise, the other player can refresh your display by using the SEND command. The previous move is always in memory, so you can back up one move's worth at any time. 300/1200/2400 baud is supported, although it is recommended that you use 300 baud. (If you can play chess at 2400 baud, good luck finding a worthy opponent!)

For those who spend a lot of time thinking, games can be saved and reloaded. If you put your opponent "in check", you can use the control key to send an audible "ding". You can also send a "double ding" if your opponent falls asleep or is otherwise unresponsive.

This chess game will not monitor the validity of your moves. It knows nothing of chess. All it does is transmit your moves, so illegal moves will be accepted by the computer (but probably not by your opponent). PBMCHES.S runs in mono or medium res. The display is very pleasant in mono, and acceptable in med.

RLSGD\_09.ARC                      Programmer:   Jeffrey Kinzer

=====

This small utility, "GrafX Display", generates screen displays of multiple DEGAS low resolution uncompressed (.PI1) or NEOchrome pictures. After loading the program (low resolution only), click on the folder where your picture files are located. Picture types cannot be mixed; choose either .PI1 or NEO pictures. Pictures from other folders can be added later. Now specify how many pictures you'd like displayed on a

"page". Once the first page is visible, you can cycle through various color combinations or flip between pages. A directory can be "tagged" for future reference.

Screen displays of multiple pictures are not esthetically pleasing. Your brain must fill in the blanks. However, if you're searching around for a certain picture file and can't remember its filename, you should be able to recognize it on the screen.

TXTDUMP2.ARC                    Programmer: Michael Shallop            \*\* SHAREWARE \*\*  
=====

TEXT DUMP is an ASCII-file printer in the form of a desk accessory. Any ASCII file will print. Page length is 55 lines, and page perforations will be skipped automatically. Form feeds will be stripped. A condensed pitch mode is available.

New in this version (2.0) is batch processing. Up to ten files of any length can be tagged, and the files can be located anywhere on your drive(s). The printing will continue until the tenth file is done. TEXT DUMP may be used within other GEM-based programs, and does work within NeoDesk.

The programmer did his testing on a 1040 with TOS 1.4 and had no problems. However, my Mega 2 did not get along well with this program. Desktop corruption was rife (although leaving the desktop and then returning to it cleaned it up every time). Still, for large printing batch jobs, it's worth the trouble.

UNCLE1.ARC    UNCLE2.ARC    UNCLE3.ARC  
Programmers: Michael Shallop    (UNCLE1.)    <-----\*\* Shareware \*\*  
              Carl J. Hafner     (UNCLE2, UNCLE3)  
=====

The "UNCLE" series is a group of diverse programs. UNCLE1 is a disk librarian which allows you to catalog your floppies. The resulting text file is in pure ASCII format and can be edited with any word processor. Because it uses only 66K of RAM, the program is loaded once and remains in memory, thus freeing up your disk drives to read directories. Medium resolution only.

Included with the disk librarian are two more programs. One, a clock-setter, allows you to date-stamp a file to your liking without having to exit to the desktop. The other is a floppy formatter (single/double).

UNCLE2 contains two desk accessories. The first, CLOCK\_\_3, is a color-only clock-setting utility. The second, UNCLERAM, offers a quick and easy way to check the amount of free RAM available in your system.

UNCLE3 is silly but fun. Use any MIDI keyboard to strobe random colors on your screen (color only). Each time a key is hit, a random color will appear. See how quickly you can develop a migraine.

\*\*\*\*\*  
PD/SHAREWARE STop - by Mark Quinn  
\*\*\*\*\*



=====> This program is SHAREWARE

File name: SEQUENCE.ARC Author: Henry Cosh  
Program name: 16-Voice Sequencer File type: Application

After dusting off a CZ-1000 and "jamming" my fingers into places good keyboardists would shun, I played back my "Cacraphony in C" (with the help of this program) and once again reaffirmed that I cannot tickle the ivories with the best of them. Then I discovered that the program has the following features:

- o Multi-Voice recording using separate MIDI channels or programs, split MIDI keyboards and/or velocity ranges.
- o Variable resolution Map of 8 Voices on desktop continuously.
- o Mouse click sampling of any music in the Map.
- o Simple editing using mouse and MIDI keyboard on blocks down to hemi-demi-semi-quavers, with no MIDI event lists.
- o Sections for naming passages plus setting time signature, tempo, and local quantization.
- o Variable resolution metronome on any MIDI channel, program, note, velocity. May be driven by external MIDI clock.
- o Full Voice/Block copy, move, quantize, randomize, transpose, velocity update.
- o Filtering of controllers, note ranges and velocity ranges on input, output or by direct manipulation.
- o Undo/Redo on all operations that change the music.
- o Through channel specification for each voice.
- o All MIDI notes/channels/programs may be input from MIDI keyboard, or typed on the computer keyboard.
- o MIDI channels and program numbers base may be selected to be 0 or 1.

Unlike a "bare bones" sequencer I used many moons ago, this one displayed the music visually, in blocks. One can Quantize, Randomize, Transpose, Copy, and do other STuff with these blocks. Files may be merged, and there is a "PUNCH" feature which allows for more accurate editing.

I was successful in running the program only when its .RSC file was in the root directory on drive A.

As I've stated, I am no "Kid MIDI" (the list of features is from the docs), but I was able to crudely navigate my way through the program with a little help from the manual. If you're looking for a shareware sequencer, this is probably the one you're looking for.

~~~~~  
File name: 2COLUMNS.LZH Author: Jonathan Corey  
Program name: Two Column Printer File type: Utility

This program (Two Column Printer, Version 3) more than lives up to its name. In addition to printing in two-column "magazine format", it can easily do "two-sided printing on continuous form paper", uses straight ASCII text files, has editable printer drivers (two Epson, Panasonic and Deskjet drivers are included--one may work with your printer), sports more features than many programs you pay for, and does its job elegantly.

I was very impressed with the output on a Deskjet. We stepped through the various setup screens without consulting the manual and ended up with a polished-looking document.

"Quinn's Quickies"

HYSCRN12.ARC

Create "Hyper" computer index cards.

SHADW.ARC

Find the hidden balls by 'shooting' rays of light into the box.  
Monochrome only.

SKIPPERF.ARC

Two programs (one's an AUTO .PRG and the other's an .ACC) that will free the user from printing "on the perforation".

SKR\_GDWD.ARC

Makes SEEKER (the public domain KJV Bible) compatible with GODSWORD, an earlier download.

SMARTDAT.ARC

Set the system date from a file.

SNDBYTE.ARC

Get more out of the ST's sound chip with this GEM-based sound generator program.

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*****
                        ATARI USERS UNITE!
*****
Reader Commentary      (That includes you, fellow 8-bitters!)
by Elliott John Coerper - Osan AFB, Korea
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I was working the night shift schedule here at Osan, everything was quiet, almost too quiet. Chief Fishnarishski (Fish) had already dosed off when suddenly we were thrown out of our seats. Bombs were going off and they were going off VERY close.

Foolishly we opened our door peering outside to see what had happened. Two more bombs went off, this time knocking out our power. The force of them knocked me against the side of our building with a loud thud. Meanwhile the field across from our building quickly lit up with gun fire. Small flashes of light illuminated our countryside giving me a new meaning to "A thousand points of light".

I know the Korean language well enough to know that someone said they were going to terminate us. We instantly hustled inside, but couldn't lock the door behind us. Our only viable alternative was to hide in Fish's office.

Unfortunately the inevitable happened, we heard someone come in.

Since I had trained in the Martial Arts I decided that if I was going to be terminated, I was going to go down fighting! I perched above the door waiting for him to enter. In he came and down I went viciously putting a choke hold on him. It worked?!! Instantaneously his body went limp in my arms. Just then the lights came back on and we learned I'd taken out one of our own!

Yes, Team Spirit has hit Korea. What is Team Spirit? It's a combined, joint exercise in Korea where the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Reserve Units, and the Koreans practice together, for war.

It's great! Usually you never get to work side by side with people in different branches of the service or, for that fact, the Koreans. However, once a year we get to work with every branch of the service. Turns out, they're no different then us.

So what does this all have to do with Atari Computers? Everything! We are all in a war together right now (The Revolution). Aren't we trying to bring Atari into the mainstream?

Unfortunately, I've heard many 8-bitters saying they will not support The Revolution because it's a 16-bit Revolution! Could you imagine if the different services said that? "I'm not going to war because this is an Artillery war", or "it's an Air Force war"... The only way we win wars, is by working and fighting TOGETHER! It took every branch of the service to win in Panama.

Whatever success that Atari 8-bit has had over the past three years is due largely in part to the ST line. Had Atari relied only upon the 8-bit market and not developed (or continue to develop) the 16-bit line, we would not have an Atari Corporation to kick around. And, whatever success we are going to have in the upcoming years, is going to rely upon the success of Atari Corporation. As they succeed, so will the 8-bit market.

If you think other third party companies will support us if Atari Corporation goes out of business, just look at who is supporting Adam Computers! How about the Timex-Sinclair....or ColecoVision?

The only way we are going to see new products for our 8-bit computers is to support The Revolution. Let them know that we are proud owners of 8-bit Computers! Write a letter or two or even three, but insure they know that you own an 8-bit.

Let's try something, let's all write off to Andy Rooney (if he's working this week) and Paul Harvey. We'll tell them about The Revolution. If you know how to write, write a scenario for them. I can imagine them sitting behind a computer. What's this mouse thing, it doesn't look like a mouse? And what is this thing about WYSIWYG software. Why don't they have software that allows you to see what you get? Why do they call these things "Floppy Diskettes?" (clunk, clunk), they don't seem too floppy to me. And what is TOS, am I supposed to toss this computer in the air to make it work?

Come on, be imaginative. We are a force to be reckoned with, if we get involved. Just one letter WILL help! Well, that's it for now, remember, always keep the Faith, support The Revolution and always talk up Atari Computers.

\*\*\*\*\*  
PIRACY RESPONSE  
\*\*\*\*\*  
by Ron Kovacs

Last week I published an article written by Joseph Hicswa a fellow JACG member about piracy. This article was presented as reader commentary and did not reflect those of this publication.

The article was J. Hicswa's comments and feeling about piracy which brought about the responses that follow my commentary below.

#### COMMENTARY

The policy of this publication is to present news, reviews and feedback from our readers. In the nearly five years we have been producing weekly online magazines, we have always allowed our readers to comment and will present opposing points of view the following week. From the little research I have done on reader commentaries, I found that we have gone atleast 4 straight weeks with opposing and responding commentary on a particular issue.

The content of these commentaries have been varied and outspoken at times but all published because we feel it is important to pass along our readers comments when they are submitted. We do not necessarily agree with all the comments received and if they are out of line they probably would not appear. To date, I have not received a letter marked as reader commentary and not published it.

I will not edit or rephrase a readers commentary and will continue the policy. I correct spelling errors only. Lastly, we do not receive letters every week so this really is not a regular incident.

To balance the comments of last week's article, I have reprinted messages from our designated area on GENie and from email where a reader responded with a text file.

Category 31, Topic 2 Message 43 Sat Mar 10, 1990  
D.A.BRUMLEVE at 00:28 CST

Wow, your "Reader Commentary" by Joseph E. Hicswa had me going for a while, until I realized how easy life was going to be from now on. As a writer of both pd and commercial offerings (like most ST programmers), I've noticed that my commercial programs bring in income that allows me to buy better development tools and equipment and attend Atari shows, whereas my pd programs do not. But now that I've embraced Mr. Hicswa's philosophy, I won't need money to buy these things anymore!

I mean, he figured that because I use Charles Johnson's Pinhead 1.2,

Charles has the \_right\_ to use my Kidpublisher Professional at no charge...And not just Charles! If I use Charles' program, \_everybody\_ who has ever given free help has the right to to use my commercial programs at no charge!

And, conversely, since \_I\_ have published some two dozen freely-distributed programs, \_I\_ have the right to use HotWire at no charge! And not just me, but \_everybody\_ ...

Ja, makes sense, doesn't it? I've given, so now it's time to get!

This strikes me as a singularly remarkable philosophy. There is apparently no need for me to write commercial programs at all; after all, I won't need to buy anything. I'll put them all out pd, even the ones I spent months and months on! Then when I need to improve my compiler so that I can share better programs, I'm supposed to just take it! After all, GFA \_owes\_ it to me. And when I need to publish a poster, I'll just take a dtp package. After all, ISD \_owes\_ it to me. When I need to improve my equipment to make better programs, I'll just take it: my dealer, Atari, the folks in Taiwan who put it together--they owe me plenty! When I need to go to Toronto or Anaheim to a show, I'll just get on an airplane and go, open a hotel room door and settle in... These guys \_must\_ owe me plenty, I've given so much to so many!

Yes, I've given enough, and the scales are tilted heavily in my direction. Hmm...Looks a little light on Joseph E. Hicswa's end! Let's see...Do you suppose Joseph E. Hicswa has something I want? Maybe a CD player or a Lynx? A Mercedes? I've got a \_right\_ to that stuff!

Will he hand it over? You bet he will! Joe's a generous guy. Just look how freely he shares my stuff with others!

Of course, since I won't need money, I won't need to program anymore, either. Oh, yeah, I've got some 70 unexplored program ideas on my idea board, but it'll be a long time before the debt due me is repaid, and the ideas will wait until then. Joe and Joe's kids and Joe's grandkids won't know what they missed, and they won't owe me a damn thing.

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Message 45                      Sat Mar 10, 1990   C.F.JOHNSON   at 09:01 PST

-----  
I was appalled at the "article" by Joseph Hicswa in ZNET 510. Whoever decided to print this semi-literate bunch of ravings made an extremely unwise decision.

I personally will NOT be downloading or reading ZNET until this totally absurd pile of junk is refuted by the editors.

It's absolutely, mind-bogglingly irresponsible to publish an article ADVOCATING piracy (that's right!), as ST developers are leaving for other computers at an alarming rate, and once-loyal users are selling their systems in droves.

I'm disgusted with ZNET.

- Charles F. Johnson  
CodeHead Software

Message 53                      Sun Mar 11, 1990   Z-NET [John Nagy]   at 01:32 EST

-----  
LOTS of "guest editorials" and "reader viewpoints" and "commentaries" are seen as incoherent and irresponsible ravings by those who disagree. Abortion, racial matters, religion, etc. fill the editorial pages of respected newspapers and the minutes at the end of newscasts everywhere. Many of the positions I hear and read being advocated are repulsive to me... just as the concepts I read in Mr. Hicswa's commentary about Piracy are repulsive and "irrational" to me. But just as I won't stop reading the LA TIMES nor watching 60 minutes (Rooney, you know....), I don't expect that Hicswa's commentary (clearly marked as READER COMMENTARY) should make you drop Z\*NET, Charles.

If you, Charles, or anyone else here thinks that this is the ONLY person on the planet who has constructed a rationalization for piracy, you must not visit this planet often.

Mr. Hicswa's commentary will have served a lofty purpose if even a few people read it and say "that's looney", then wonder about how their own behavior and reasoning on piracy compares.

Obviously, the most valuable result of publishing an outrageous commentary is the well reasoned and effectively presented flip side of the matter that inevitably comes from other readers. Thanks a LOT, DOT, your initial comments are both thoroughly entertaining and quite powerful. LOTS more effective than, for example, saying you didn't like it and would hold your breath til we apologised.

Message 57                      Sun Mar 11, 1990 LEPULLEY    at 10:46 MST

-----  
Ron/John,

I believe that a publishers 'neutrality' ceases when he publishes an article/guest editorial that promotes illegal activities (would you publish an article on how to make a home-made pipe-bomb?).

While Mr. Hicswa has every right to his personal opinions and Zmag does have the right to post those opinions if they so wish, I believe that Zmag was very remiss in not putting a disclaimer of some type at the bottom of the article (i.e. maybe something like "We do not condone nor endorse piracy in any form or for any reason. Mr. Hicswa's opinions are his alone.")

But his article did serve as a prime example of what lengths that some people will stoop to defend their piracy (I thought the article was a spoof at first...I thought I'd heard every rational possible for piracy but his article proved to me that I hadn't).

(LL)oyd Pulley

Message 60                      Sun Mar 11, 1990 C.F.JOHNSON    at 14:19 PST

-----  
John Nagy,

There are a couple of large differences between the discussions on abortion, race, religion and other matters that one finds in newspapers and on television, and the "commentary" by Mr. Hicswa.

First, no responsible newspaper gives a forum to every random crazy who is able to manipulate a pen (or a computer) well enough to write down

his/her "ideas". Certain journalistic standards have to be met before ANY article will be published in ANY newspaper. Mr. Hicswa's "commentary" is so full of misused words, misspellings, and horrible grammar that it wouldn't even be published in the 'Letters' column of any newspaper with which I'm familiar. An editor would glance at it once, and then immediately file it in the garbage...with all the other letters from psychos.

Second, do you honestly believe that any newspaper or television station would give column space or air time to a person who advocates the theft of other people's property, because it's somehow (in some nebulous, unspecified way) good for society? Get real, John. If you believe that's the way "free speech" works, then you're living in another dimension. You don't see articles in newspapers or on 60 Minutes advocating pederasty or rape or murder, do you? Is that because the people who think these activities are OK and want to promote them (and they DO exist) are having their freedom restricted? No -- it's because it's absurd to espouse viewpoints like that in a civilized society, and RESPONSIBLE journalists are aware of this. Just as it's absurd and destructive to give a forum in an ST-oriented publication to someone (Mr. Hicswa) who wants to urge all other ST users to go out and pirate everything they can.

As Dorothy said, there are some intelligent arguments that can be made against the "ownership" concept as it regards computer software. Richard Stallman of the Free Software Foundation talks and writes a lot about these issues. Perhaps Mr. Hicswa once read something about Stallman and the FSF, and seized on it as a great justification to steal software, or maybe his "views" are strictly his own creation. I don't know, and don't really care. There isn't one "argument" in the "article" even worth trying to refute.

What disturbs me is the fact that ZNET will publish this kind of drivel, and then attempt to defend it as "free speech". With support for the ST rapidly dwindling, users abandoning Atari, and Atari itself seemingly oblivious to the mess they've made of the US market, publishing this "commentary" is the moral equivalent of yelling "FIRE!" in a crowded theater.

In any case, just as ZNET has the right to publish stuff like this if they choose, I have the right to choose NOT to download and read ZNET. A right which I plan to exercise from now on.

- Charles

READER REPLY by Jan Dembowski

Remarkable. Usually the content of ZNET is really very good but in this most recent issue I read something that really made me wonder and ask myself "What is ZNET saying?". I am referring to a childish tirade in issue 510 by Joseph Hicswa. Then I re-read it and saw that it was a Reader Commentary. So in the spirit of "Reader Commentary's" I would like to make a reply.

Is Mr. Hicswa living on the same planet as I? He says that he is sick and tired of software manufacturers complaining about piracy. "Show me the programmer who has never used a public domain program, who has not received FREE help from a friend, fellow employee, computer club member, or book from a public library." Ah. I suppose that Bell Labs should

not charge anything except costs of manufacturing electronic hardware since they "received FREE help from a friend, fellow employee"? That makes sense. Hey, maybe we could also get any research done by engineers placed in the public domain. They used free Calculus and Euclidean Geometry that was NOT there work but done by earlier mathematicians.

Let me explain something that Mr. Hicswa does not seem to understand. The designers of commercial software are ENGINEERS. Many of them have studied programing in college and have worked hard to learn what they know. Would he go to a professional architect and say "Design my home for me and I'll only pay for the cost of materials. You owe a debt to all the classical architects and pioneers in the field. So PAY UP!" Have I missed something in his logic...? Then he goes on to stating that "Computers are one of the greatest things that befall Humanity. Our progress is being accelerated like never before." What an excellent excuse for PIRATING. Copy software! Distribute a developers work! After all those "disk mongers" just "now want to get wealthy for their labors" "from someone elses freebees"! And the nicest thing about that argument is that by PIRATING we are advancing humanities progress like never before.

I wonder if Mr. Hicswa ever bothered to meet a developer? He must believe that they all are "rich" and drive sports cars. Or did he really meet one and saw that they all have horns and pointy tails? Hey, those devils are keeping the costs of software out of the hands of many poor souls. I am thoroughly disgusted at his attitude: it sounds like the noise that a little child makes when his hands are slapped when told he can't have an expensive toy. He seems to feel that software manufacturers owe people something. Why? Because he purchased a computer, and they OWE him software? If Mr. Hicswa wants to bring software to handicapped people then instead of crying about the costs why doesn't he do something like starting a fund to buy software for people who cannot? No... a child would never do something like that. A child would rather push the problem into the laps of others and claim its their fault. In this case the child is Mr. Hicswa and the other's are the software manufacturers.

Mr. Hicswa ends his nonsense with a suggestion that piracy laws should be repealed. Piracy laws? They are call "copyright laws" and they are not going to be repealed. But I can hope that he pursues this and is caught and is faced with the full extent of the law.

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~~~~~  
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